

Message Text

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15

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W

----- 124316

R 081810Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1878

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE QUITO 7311

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINR EC AR

SUBJ: VELASCO IBARRA ANNOUNCES AVAILABILITY AS PROVISIONAL
PRESIDENT

1. JOSE MARIA VELASCO IBARRAN FIVE-TIME PRESIDENT OF
ECUADOR CURRENTLY EXILED IN BUENOS AIRES, ANNOUNCED
THROUGH A COMMUNICATION GIVEN TO ONE OF HIS PARTY LEADERS
AND PRINTED IN EL COMERCIO OF OCT. 7 THAT "IF THE
ECUADOREAN PEOPLE WANTED AND IF THE DICTATOR-SHIP
PERMITTED" HE WOULD BE WILLING TO RETURN TO ECUADOR
TO PRESIDE OVER ELECTIONS FOR A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

2. VELASCO STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT HE WOULD NOT RPT
NOT BE A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE BECAUSE HE FELT THAT--
AT EIGHTY-THREE YEARS OF AGE--HIS ELECTION AND POSSIBLE
DEATH IN OFFICE WOULD ONLY COMPLICATE THE TRANSITION TO
CIVILIAN RULE.

3. VELASCO REJECTED THE IDEA OF A NEW CONSTITUTION, SAYING
THAT THIS WOULD CAUSE NEW CONFLICTS AND MAKE THE TRANSITION
EVEN MORE DIFFICULT. HE ALSO REJECTED THE IDEA OF
HAVING A PLEBISCITE TO DECIDE AMONG TWO PREVIOUS CON-
STITUTIONS AND ONE YET TO BE WRITTEN. IN REGARD TO
PLEBISCITES, HE SAID, "WHAT HAPPENS IN SWITZERLAND CAN'T
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HAPPEN EVERYWHERE."

4. COMMENT: IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT
WOULD INVITE BACK THE STORMY PETREL OF ECUADOREAN POLITICS
FOR ANY SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE TRANSITIONAL STAGE. AFTER
ALL, IT WAS VELASCO'S CHARGED ABUSE OF OFFICE DURING HIS
LAST TERM AS PRESIDENT WHICH PRECIPITATED AND JUSTIFIED
THE ADVENT OF MILITARY RULE.
CORR

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To: STATE
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